

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 03464 300408Z

14-12
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 IO-10 /079 W

----- 115977

R 300203Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5855
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMCONSUL SYDNEY

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: AS, PINT, XF, PFOR
SUBJ: PLO OFFICIAL TO VISIT AUSTRALIA

1. PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM'S DECISION MADE PUBLIC MAY 14 TO APPROVE
A VISIT TO AUSTRALIA BY PLO REPRESENTATIVE MR. GAMEL EL
SURANI HAS BEEN STRONGLY CRITICIZED BY AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY
PRESIDENT BOB HAWKE AND BY MHR JOSEPH BERENSEN (ALP-WA).

2. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS REPORTEDLY ORDERED THAT THE VISA BE
ISSUED TO MR. EL SURANI IN HIS CAPACITY AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE ARAB LEAGUE, BUT BOTH MR. HAWKE AND MR. BERENSEN POINTED
OUT THAT HE IS ALSO THE HEAD OF THE PLO'S OFFICE IN CAIRO AS
WELL AS A CHIEF DELEGATE AND SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE PLO. BOTH
STRONGLY OPPOSED ALLOWING A MEMBER OF AN ORGANIZATION DEDICATED
TO VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM TO VISIT AUSTRALIA. THE PREMIER OF NEW
SOUTH WALES, MR. THOMAS L. LEWIS, ALSO ANNOUNCED MAY 29 THAT
THE PLO MAN WOULD BE GIVEN NO ASSISTANCE BY NSW AUTHORITIES
DURING HIS VISIT.

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3. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO DISCERN ANY LOGICAL POLITICAL REASONS BEHIND THE PRIME MINISTER'S DECISION. IT WILL HURT HIM POLITICALLY AMONG AUSTRALIA'S STRONG AND VOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY AND AMONG OTHER LABOR SUPPORTERS WITH STRONG PRO-ISRAELI FEELINGS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE VISIT WILL DO LITTLE TO SATISFY THE EXTREME STUDENT AND VOCAL LEFT WING INTELLECTUALS WHO FAVOR THE PLO. ON THIS ISSUE, THE PRIME MINISTER IS OUT OF STEP WITH THE PREVAILING SENTIMENTS BOTH WITHIN HIS PARTY AND WITHIN THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORATE.
GREEN

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NNN

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